

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-10 JUSE-00

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R 271530Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7818

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, TD, SNAR, GJ

SUBJ: MIAMI CUSTOMS CONFERENCE SUCCESS IN VIEW OF

TRINIDAD DELEGATES

CARACAS FOR DEA

REF: STATE 102084 AND PREVIOUS

1. CARLYLE L. WILLIAMS, GOTT COMPTROLLER OF CUSTOMS, AND OSSIE WALKER, CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED WITH SUBSTANCE AND USEFULNESS OF RECENT MIAMI CUSTOMS CONFERENCE MAY 7-9, AND HOPE THERE WILL BE A FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO EXPAND ON THE THEMES RAISED.

2. ACCORDING TO MR. WALKER, THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO DELEGATION DID FEEL THAT THE MIAMI CONFERENCE COULD HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE USEFUL IF IT HAD BEEN EXPANDED TO INCLUDE OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES ON THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE CARIBBEAN. HE PARTICULARLY CITED COLOMBIA, WHICH HE FELT COULD HAVE ADDED MUCH TO THE DISCUSSIONS ON THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC.

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3. WALKER NOTED ALSO THAT HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED AT THE CONFERENCE BY THE DELEGATE FROM GRENADA, WHO COMPLAINED THAT DUE TO DOMESTIC GRENADIAN PROBLEMS HE AND MOST OTHER CIVIL SERVANTS HAD AT THAT TIME NOT RECEIVED THEIR SALARIES FOR TWO MONTHS. THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CUSTOMS OFFICIALS FEEL THAT THIS GROWING DISCONTENT AMONG GRENADA CIVIL SERVANTS MAKES GRENADA MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO ANY MONEY MAKING SCHEMES. THEY FEAR THAT GRENADA IS THUS VULNERABLE TO BECOMING A BRIDGE OR CONTACT POINT FOR EXPANDED NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. NATURALLY THEY WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE SUCH TRAFFIC MOVE SO CLOSE TO TRINIDAD. IT WAS NOT SUGGESTED THAT THIS HAD ALREADY HAPPENED, HOWEVER.

4. THE CONFERENCE RECEIVED FRONT PAGE NEWS TREATMENT IN THE DAILY EXPRESS NEWSPAPER HERE MAY 26, FEATURING COMPTROLLER WILLIAMS' COMMENTS THAT THE RECENT CUSTOMS CONFERENCE COULD LEAD TO THE SETTING UP OF A CENTRAL OFFICE IN THE CARIBBEAN FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON SMUGGLERS.

5. IF FURTHER CUSTOMS CONFERENCES FOR THE AREA ARE HELD, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT ON BASIS OF THIS HIGHLY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WILL DEFINITELY PLAN TO PARTICIPATE.

RICH

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